

Frevert-Schnaitter House
740 West Main Street
Madison
Jefferson County
Indiana

HABS No. IND-91

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. IND-91

FREVERT-SCHNAITTER HOUSE

Location: 740 West Main Street (north side of street), Madison,
Jefferson County, Indiana

USGS Madison West Quadrangle Map, Universal Transverse
Mercator Coordinates: 16.640030.4288740

Present Owner
and Occupant: Judge and Mrs. Paul R. Schnaitter

Present Use: Residence

Statement of
Significance: The Frevert-Schnaitter House was built 1849 and is a
fine example of one of Madison's stately mid-century
residences. Its generous proportions and spaciousness
are characteristic of the town's two-story houses. The
typical Madison floor plan, however, was asymmetrical
with an off-center through hall rather than a symmetri-
cal plan with a central hall, as found here. The clas-
sical entrance portico is the structure's outstanding
feature. The octagonal wooden columns supporting a
plain denticulated cornice is unique to Madison archi-
tecture.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1849. The tax records and assessments of the City of Madison show a significant increase in the assessed value of this property between 1848 and 1850. This indicates that the house was built in 1849.
2. Architect: No information available.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The land upon which the house stands was originally part of the General Milton Stapp Farm. August L. Frevert bought the property in 1849 and erected his house soon after.

4. Original plan and construction: This five-bayed symmetrical brick structure is rectangular with a projecting central portico. The main section is brick laid in common bond with headers every eighth course. A soldier course at the roof line of alternating recessed and projecting bricks form a dentiled cornice. The cornice is painted white. The low-pitched gable roof has two end chimneys which together serve seven interior fireplaces. Windows on the front(south) elevation were one-over-one light double-hung sash with stone lintels and sills. The one-story front entry portico with wide dentiled cornice is supported by wooden octagonal columns. The door and side-lights are framed by engaged half octagonal pilasters, complementing the octagonal columns.

Four rooms are arranged symmetrically around the central hall on each floor. Interior details are of simplified classical detail. The most distinctive features are the cherry wood railing, turned newel post and spindles framing the straight flight of stairs.

5. Alterations and additions: Six-over-six light double-hung sash windows replaced one-over-one light windows circa 1900. Major changes in the last thirty years include the addition of a second floor to the service wing, moving the kitchen to the original dining room area, and closing off one fireplace.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

August L. Frevert was born in Exteu, Hesse Cassel, Germany on May 13, 1813. He came to the United States in 1840, and moved to Madison from Richmond, Virginia in 1845. In 1846, Frevert married Elizabeth Bachman, sister of James Bachman and daughter of early settler Alois Bachman. Frevert engaged in many occupations during his life. He was a baker, hotelier with James Bachman in the "Indian-Kentuck House" at Main and Walnut Streets, and a "dyer and scourer" in Mundt's Candy Store at 207 West Main Street. Frevert retired from business in 1866 and died April 3, 1876.

David Graham Phillips, leading journalist of the early twentieth century and author of more than twenty novels dealing with social problems, was born in Madison and lived here in the home of his sister, Mrs. William McClelland. Phillips' most widely known book is Susan Lenox: Her Fall and Rise (1917)

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: None.

2. Bibliography:

a. Primary and unpublished sources:

Tax records and assessments of the City of Madison,
1840-1855, Madison City Hall, Madison, Indiana.

b. Secondary and published sources:

Madison "Daily Courier," September 16, 1850;
December 2, 1852; April 3, 1876.

Prepared by Philip Dole
Team Historian
Historic American
Buildings Survey
Summer 1971

PART II. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana and Historic Madison. The structure was recorded in the summer of 1971 under the direction of James C. Massey, Chief of HABS, and Melvin M. Rotsch (Texas A & M University), with student assistant architects John G. Albers (University of Florida), Bruce E. Lynch (Washington University), H. T. Moriarity (University of Texas), John M. Szubski (Princeton University), and architectural historian Philip Dole (University of Oregon), at HABS Field Office in Madison, Indiana. The data was edited and expanded in the HABS office in November 1978 by Jan E. Cigliano, staff historian. Photographs were taken by HABS staff photographer Jack E. Boucher in 1971.